

## Message Text

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15

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-10 RSC-01

CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 L-03 H-03

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-15 PRS-01 TAR-02

AGR-20 COME-00 FRB-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 RSR-01 /181 W

----- 043388

R 081625Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1313

INFO AMEMBASEZ ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

.AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE 950

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, CM, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH SECSTATE DISCUSSES REVISION OF BILATERAL ACCORDS AND  
EEC ASSOCIATION WITH AHIDJO

REF: (A) YAOUNDE 2607, (B) YAOUNDE 2703

1. SUMMARY. AFTER LONG CORDIAL SESSION WITH PRESIDENT  
AHIDJO AUGUST 4, FRENCH SECSTATE FOR COOPERATION DENIAU  
ANNOUNCED TO PRESS THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR REVISING COOPERATION  
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ACCORDS WOULD BEGIN IN SEPTEMBER, THAT NO THORNY PROBLEMS

EXISTED BUT 13-YEAR-OLD AGREEMENTS NEEDED UPDATING. FROM DENIAU'S STATEMENT AND COMMENTS BY FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCES, IT APPEARS THAT REVISION LIKELY PERTAIN MOSTLY TO AREA OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL. NO INDICATIONS WHATSOEVER OF MONETARY PROBLEMS OR CHALLENGING OF FRANC ZONE ADHERENCE. HARMONIOUS NEGOTIATIONS FORESEEN. FRENCH PLEASED BY EXPRESSED GURC ATTITUDE TOWARD RENEWING EEC ASSOCIATION ARRANGEMENTS. AHIDJO MAY BE ANNOYED BY ASSERTIVE NIGERIAN LEADERSHIP RE ASSOCIATION, BUT HAS KEPT OPTIONS OPEN ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

2. FRENCH SECSTATE FOR COOPERATION JEAN-FRANCOIS DENIAU WAS IN YAOUNDE AUGUST 2-6 ON VISIT DESCRIBED AS "OFFICIAL" AND AT INVITATION PRESIDENT AHIDJO. IN ADDITION TO MEETINGS WITH VARIOUS MINISTERS, DENIAU HAD TWO-AND-ONE-HALF HOUR SESSION WITH AHIDJO WHO ALSO HOSTED DINNER FOR HIM.

3. IN PRESS INTERVIEW AFTER MEETING WITH AHIDJO, DENIAU ANNOUNCED THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR REVISING FRENCH-CAMEROON ACCORDS WOULD BEGIN IN SEPTEMBER. DESCRIBED COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES AS "RATHER GOOD", BUT ACKNOWLEDGED CHANGES NEEDED IN 13-YEAR-OLD AGREEMENTS IN LIGHT RAPID EVOLUTION OF CAMEROON. INDICATED REVISION WOULD BEAR ESPECIALLY ON QUESTIONS OF MANAGEMENT, SINCE HALF OF FRENCH AID TO AFRICA AND CAMEROON WAS IN FORM OF PERSONNEL PLACED AT COUNTRY'S DISPOSITION. JUDGED QUESTIONS TO BE SETTLED IN INTERESTS OF BOTH PARTIES WERE "IMPORTANT, BUT NOT THORNY." ALSO SPECIFIED THERE WAS NO RPT NO PROBLEM RE MONETARY AGREEMENT. STRESSED THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD OPEN IN CALM ATMOSPHERE, IN REFLECTION OF GOOD FRANCO-CAMEROONIAN RELATIONS.

4. DENIAU ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO "REALISTIC AND POSITIVE ATTITUDE" OF GURC TOWARD RENEWAL OF YAOUNDE CONVENTION WITH EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, AS ILLUSTRATED BY AHIDJO INTERVIEW PUBLISHED AUGUST 2 (REF B).

5. FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCES INDICATED TO US AFTER DENIAU VISIT THAT BOTH HE AND HIS BROTHER ARE LONGSTANDING ACQUAINTANCES OF AHIDJO AND TALKS WERE EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND IN DEPTH. GURC HAS NOT YET FORMULATED ITS PROPOSALS FOR REVISED ACCORDS.  
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FRENCH WANT HAVE PROPOSALS ENOUGH IN ADVANCE TO STUDY BEFORE BEGINNING NEGOTIATIONS. PROPOSALS NOT LIKELY BE AVAILABLE BEFORE SEPTEMBER 15, WITH NEGOTIATIONS IN LATE SEPTEMBER. VENUE NOT CERTAIN, BUT PROBABLY PARIS. GURC MINISTRIES PRINCIPALLY CONCERNED WITH NEGOTIATIONS ARE PLAN, CIVIL SERVICE, AND EDUCATION. (COMMENT: SINCE BULD OF FRENCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL ARE TEACHERS, THIS FITS IN WITH DENIAU STATEMENT, PARA. 3 ABOVE.) GURC HAS INDICATED

INTEREST IN MULTI-YEAR AID COMMITMENT, BUT THIS REPRESENTS SAME PROBLEM FOR FRANCE AS IT WOULD FOR U.S. BECAUSE OF NATIONAL BUDGETARY PROCESS. SOURCES ALSO OFFERED GENERAL COMMENT THAT SINCE ORIGINAL ACCORDS ARE EXTREMELY DETAILED THEY CAN BE USEFULLY SIMPLIFIED WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT CHANGE.

6. RE EEC ASSOCIATION, FRENCH EMBASSY SOURCES INTERPRET AHIDJO'S AUG 2 PRESS STATEMENT AS EXPRESSLY DESIGNED TO SET STAGE FOR DENIAU'S ARRIVAL. THEY SEE AHIDJO KEEPING HIS OPTIONS OPEN BUT CAREFULLY KEEPING DISTANCE FROM EXTREME POSITIONS. IN HIS MEETING WITH DENIAU, AHIDJO REPORTEDLY MADE KNOWN HIS DISSATISFACTION WITH OAU SECGEN EKANGAKI STATEMENT AT LAGOS MEETING AND WAS LIKEWISE CRITICAL OF NIGERIA, AT LEAST BY IMPLICATION, FOR PRETENDING TO SPEAK FOR ALL OF AFRICA. SOURCES COMMENTED NUMBER OF FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES UNHAPPY WITH EKANGAKI WHOM THEY CONSIDER COMPLETELY "IN NIGERIA'S POCKET."

7. IN BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR DENIAU EXPRESSED GREAT ADMIRATION FOR AHIDJO. QUALIFYING HIM AS THE BEST OF AFRICAN CHIEFS OF STATE, HE ADDED THAT THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT HE WAS ALWAYS EASY TO DEAL WITH.

8. COMMENT: AS WE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (REF A), ALL INDICATIONS REMAIN THAT REVISION OF FRANCO-CAMEROONIAN COOPERATION AGREEMENTS PRESENT NO RPT NO MAJOR PROBLEMS AND WILL PROCEED IN REASONABLY HARMONIOUS ATMOSPHERE. GURC WILL HAVE TO ELABORATE AND PRESENT ITS CONCRETE PROPOSALS IMMEDIATELY, ALTHOUGH SOME SLIPPAGE POSSIBLE BEYOND THE SEPTEMBER TARGET DATE, ESPECIALLY SINCE AHIDJO EXPECTED ATTEND SEPT. 4 NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT IN ALGIERS AND TAKE SEVERAL-WEEK VACATION IN FRANCE BEFORE MID-SEPTEMBER. RE EEC ASSOCIATION AGREEMENTS CONFIDENTIAL

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MENTS, AHIDJO MAY WELL BE ANNOYED BY ASSERTIVE NIGERIAN LEADERSHIP AND CLEARLY NOT RPT NOT DESIROUS OF BLATANTLY OPPOSING FRENCH POSITION AT THIS POINT IN TIME. PUBLICLY AT LEAST, GURC HAS INDEED KEPT OPTIONS OPEN. WE SUSPECT AHIDJO WILL CONTINUE ASSESS EVOLVING SITUATION BEFORE HE MAKES FINAL DECISIONS EVEN PRIVATELY RE FORM AND CONTENT OF ASSOCIATION AND DETAILS SUCH AS REVERSE PREFERENCES.

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